

Dear Partner,

The Ministry of Health (ministry) and the Association of Ontario Midwives (AOM) are working together to expand options for low-risk pregnancy and reproductive care to better serve the needs of expectant families. We are inviting applications for two programs with a special focus on improving access, choice, and better connected care:

1. **Indigenous Midwifery Programs (IMP)** provide culturally appropriate Indigenous-led midwifery services to urban, rural, northern and on-reserve Indigenous communities, through:
 - a. Culturally safe prenatal, intrapartum, post-partum care,
 - b. Programs and services to support youth and expectant families (e.g. parenting classes, breastfeeding support) and;
 - c. Community education to support youth and expectant families to make informed choices around reproductive health

In addition to pregnancy and newborn care, IMPs also provide a wide range of services for their communities including well-person care (e.g. reproductive health checks, pregnancy tests, menopausal counselling), community-based birthing practices with elders, traditional ceremonies and medicine, prenatal and parent/baby classes, adolescent rites of passage among many other activities.

The two (2) types of IMP models include:

- **An Indigenous Midwifery Program working within Interprofessional Primary Health Care Teams-** Midwives working in this model will work on a multi-disciplinary team with physicians, nurse practitioners, social workers, and traditional healers. The governance structure for these programs are primarily provided through the existing primary health care team (AHAC or FHT).
- **Autonomous Indigenous Midwifery Practice Groups-** Midwives provide the governance structure within this model and establish a strong link with local primary health care services that currently exist within their catchment area in order to better support integrated and comprehensive primary care delivery.

In addition to the Indigenous Midwifery Program, there is an opportunity for communities to apply for one-time **Indigenous Midwifery Development Funding** to support community exploration of a potential future Indigenous Midwifery Program through a needs assessment and capacity building.

- 2. Expanded Midwifery Care Models (EMCM)** enable community-based midwifery services to be delivered in a variety of settings where the existing midwifery practice group (MPG) model and funding (i.e. fee per completed course of midwifery care) are not appropriate. These settings could include, but are not limited to, interprofessional primary care teams and hospitals in areas of demonstrated need.

These models are intended to be client and quality focused and optimize the role and scope of midwives, while supporting interprofessional collaboration and coordination, as well as the integration of midwifery services into the broader health care system. Examples of EMCM initiatives include:

- **Hospitalist midwife** – provide services embedded within the hospital setting including dedicated triage assessments for clients (who may be clients of local MPG or obstetrical clients), discharge planning and communication to community midwife/most responsible provider regarding out-patient follow-up and home care services.
- **Full spectrum midwife in primary care team-based setting** to provide full course of care, including prenatal and postpartum home visits and to assist clients navigate the health care system.
- **Hospital-based integrated postpartum primary care and coordination midwife** who works in collaboration with an interprofessional primary care team to provide postpartum and newborn care to clients who do not have a primary care provider and/or for physician clients in hospital and facilitates transition between hospital and community care.
- **Primary care team-based prenatal and postpartum midwife** who works in collaboration with an interprofessional primary care team to provide comprehensive prenatal and postpartum care and assist clients to navigate the health care system.

These two initiatives provide an opportunity for healthcare providers and communities to work together to design a program that provides or enhances pregnancy and newborn care. Interested parties can contact the ministry at midwifery@ontario.ca to request an application and supporting guidance documents.

For those unable to apply in 2020-21, the 2021-21 call for applications will be issued in October 2020 and is expected to be an annual application process going forward in subsequent years.

To help support awareness and understanding of this initiative, the Primary Health Care Branch is hosting a webinar on **July 16, 2020**. To participate, please send an email to midwifery@ontario.ca by 4pm on Wednesday, July 15, 2020 noting contact information for interested participants and the ministry will reach out to those individuals with the webinar details.

Should you have any questions, the ministry and AOM are available to provide support and guidance to midwives, communities, primary care teams, and healthcare agencies on either of these opportunities.

If you would like assistance from the AOM, please contact:

Indigenous Midwifery Programs

Ellen Blais, Director, Indigenous Midwifery

Email: ellen.blais@aom.on.ca

Telephone: 416-425-9974 ext. 2270 or 1-866-418-3773 ext. 2270

Expanded Midwifery Care Models

Christine Allen, Manager, Policy and Communications

Email: christine.allen@aom.on.ca

Telephone: 416-425-9974 ext. 2227 or 1-866-418-3773 ext. 2277

For assistance from the ministry, please contact midwifery@ontario.ca

Applications will be available for distribution starting July 13, 2020.

Regards,



Nadia Surani
A/Director Primary Health Care
Ministry of Health



Juana Berinstein
Interim Executive Director
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